

INFORMATION REPORT

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SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO. 25X1

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Railroads

1. [redacted] Leaving Stalingrad the train proceeded up the west bank of the Volga for about two hours and then was transported by ferry to the east bank. This ferry and its rail connections were built during the war and joined the Astrakan-Engels-Chkalov line at Vladimirovka. From Vladimirovka we traveled via Eletskaia-Zasuchita to a point on the Chkalov-Tashkent line, and thence to Arys, where we again changed to a train going to Frunze and thence north and east into Central Siberia. Of course, this trip was indescribably slow and was made under conditions which were Spartan to say the least, as was our return journey to Poland in 1946. [redacted] departed from Frunze in that year and traveled as far as Saratov by much the same route as we had come [redacted] From Saratov we traveled to Kursk and thence to Kiev and on to Luck which was the last Soviet city we passed before arrival at the Polish border. [redacted] crowded into converted cattle cars, fitted up with wooden shelves, and hot in summer and in cold weather unheated. Also we had to provide all of our own food. All roads over which we traveled had the wide Soviet gauge. Rolling stock, especially in the European section of the USSR, was in general poor and inadequate. 25X1
2. [redacted] many large freight cars and tank cars which appeared to be in good condition and much better maintained than passenger cars. [redacted] one fine new steam locomotive which was quite large [redacted] 25X1
[redacted]
Traveling back to Poland the road-bed was naturally very rough in the Ukraine because of the severe fighting which had taken place in that area, and broken cars and locomotives were to be seen all along the line. [redacted] 25X1
[redacted] new railroad construction in the Ukraine.
[redacted] the Soviets began to repair and expand rail facilities in that area soon after the cessation of hostilities.
3. In the Kirgiz and Uzbek Republics the circular line connecting Frunze, Dzhalal Abad, Osh and Tashkent was completed during World War II. This wide gauge, single-track road [redacted] well built and 25X1

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-2-

maintained. Passing tracks were provided at stations wherever the traffic warranted them. The Frunze area was the only place in the USSR where [] railroads well operated and under apparently normal conditions and where the majority of the rolling stock was comparatively good and new. [] the reasons for this phenomenon to be the fact that the region was far removed from the battle front and that the fertile soil produced large quantities of sugar beets which had to be shipped elsewhere for conversion in chemical plants. During the latter part of my residence in Frunze all available workers in the area, men and women, were rounded up and sent to Karaganda in the Kazakh SSR to work on a new railroad project, [] never learned the ultimate destination of the new line, or even the direction in which it was being built.

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Roads

4. In the Stalingrad area the only highway traffic [] was comprised of military trucks. At first these trucks were all of Soviet make and small compared to those in use in the US, but in 1942 [] a number of Dodge trucks which were somewhat larger. In wet or snowy weather the condition of all roads became so terrible that even in peace-time all civilian traffic came to a halt, and only military components moved about. This situation, which was an important factor in the German collapse, causes villages such as Kachalino [] to become entirely isolated. Even telephone connection is worse than inadequate. It took four hours to get a trunk call through to Stalingrad, [] the telephone system had been installed in the time of the Czars and had not been improved since then. Some gravel was put on the roads each year but it did not prevent them from becoming quagmires in rainy weather.

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5. Roads in the Kirgiz Republic were better than those in the Stalingrad region, due perhaps to the fact that the climate is drier. The city itself has asphalt pavements only in the center of town, and the rest of the town suffers from dust in dry times and deep mud in wet weather. The main roads fanning out from Frunze, particularly those leading to the Sinkiang and Indian frontiers, are constructed with a surface of crushed stone or gravel which is rolled until it becomes fairly smooth and hard. [] these roads received special attention because they led to important mines. There was constant traffic along these highways, composed chiefly of small, sturdy Soviet trucks.

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6. There was a considerable amount of road construction during my 1942-1946 residence in the Kirgiz SSR. Such activity, which was especially noticeable in the years 1943-1944, was carried out under the supervision of a large unit of the NKVD. Roads were being built towards Belovodsk, Bistrovka, Karabalty and Lugovoye. A large construction battalion which included many Polish refugees was stationed at Bistrovka and was engaged in extending the road on to Rybachye at the western end of Issyk Kul. [] a railroad was being constructed to connect Frunze and Rybachye, []

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